high school mathematical contest in modeling

High School Mathematical Contest in Modeling: Unlocking Real-World Problem Solving Skills

high school mathematical contest in modeling is an exciting and intellectually stimulating competition that challenges students to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve real-world problems. Unlike traditional math contests that focus on individual problem-solving skills and quick calculations, this contest emphasizes teamwork, creativity, and the ability to construct mathematical models that reflect complex situations. It's a unique platform where high school students can not only demonstrate their mathematical prowess but also develop critical thinking, communication, and collaboration skills.

If you're a high school student passionate about math or an educator looking to encourage analytical thinking, understanding the ins and outs of this contest can open doors to invaluable learning experiences. Let's dive into what makes the high school mathematical contest in modeling so special, how it works, and tips to excel.

What is the High School Mathematical Contest in Modeling?

The high school mathematical contest in modeling (HiMCM) is a team-based competition where students are presented with open-ended problems that require the creation and analysis of mathematical models. These problems often mirror real-life scenarios drawn from fields like biology, economics, engineering, and environmental science. Participants must interpret the problem, develop a model using appropriate mathematical tools, analyze their results, and write a comprehensive report explaining their findings.

Unlike conventional tests, the contest encourages students to think deeply about how math can be applied practically. It's not just about getting the right answer; it's about understanding the problem context, making reasonable assumptions, and communicating the solution clearly.

The Structure of the Contest

Most high school modeling contests run over several days, sometimes up to a full weekend. Teams of usually three to four students receive one or more problems to solve within a limited time frame, often 36 to 48 hours. During this period, students collaborate intensively, balancing research,

mathematical analysis, and writing.

The final submission is a written report that includes:

- Problem interpretation and assumptions
- Model formulation
- Solution methodology
- Validation and analysis of results
- Discussion of limitations and possible improvements

Judges evaluate these reports based on creativity, mathematical accuracy, clarity, and the applicability of the model.

Why Participate in a Mathematical Modeling Contest?

Engaging in a high school mathematical contest in modeling offers more than just competition experience. It helps students develop a variety of skills that are invaluable in academics and beyond.

Real-World Application of Mathematics

Many students wonder how the math they learn in class applies to everyday life. Modeling contests show that math is a powerful tool for solving complex problems beyond textbook exercises. Whether it’s predicting traffic patterns, analyzing disease spread, or optimizing resource allocation, mathematical modeling bridges theory and practice.

Teamwork and Communication Skills

The contest’s team format encourages collaboration. Students must divide tasks, share ideas, and write coherent reports together. This experience hones communication skills, teaching participants how to explain technical concepts to diverse audiences — a skill highly valued in any career.

Critical Thinking and Creativity

Modeling problems are rarely straightforward. Students need to make assumptions, decide which factors to include, and creatively approach the problem to find a workable solution. This process nurtures critical thinking and innovation.

Preparing for the High School Mathematical Contest in Modeling

Preparation is key to success in modeling competitions. Here are some practical strategies to get ready:

Build Strong Mathematical Foundations

While the contest covers various topics, a solid understanding of algebra, calculus, statistics, and discrete math is essential. Familiarity with differential equations, probability, and linear programming can be particularly helpful.

Learn Modeling Techniques

Students should practice translating real-world problems into mathematical language. This includes formulating equations, creating graphs, and using matrices or simulations. Resources like textbooks on mathematical modeling or online tutorials can be beneficial.

Develop Technical Skills

Competitors often use software like MATLAB, Python, or Excel to analyze data and run simulations. Gaining proficiency in these tools can significantly improve efficiency and the quality of solutions.

Practice Writing Clear Reports

A well-written report can make a huge difference. Students should practice organizing their findings logically, using visuals like charts and diagrams, and explaining assumptions and results clearly.

Common Challenges and How to Overcome Them

Participating in a high school mathematical contest in modeling can be demanding. Here are some hurdles students might face and tips to navigate them:

Time Management

With a tight deadline, it’s easy to get overwhelmed. Creating a schedule that allocates time for brainstorming, modeling, testing, and writing can help keep the team on track.

Balancing Team Roles

Ensuring that each member contributes effectively is crucial. Assign roles based on individual strengths—such as a researcher, a coder, a writer, and a coordinator—to optimize teamwork.

Dealing with Ambiguity

Open-ended problems don’t have a single correct answer, which can be unsettling. Embrace this ambiguity by clearly stating assumptions and justifying choices made during modeling.

Examples of Problems in High School Mathematical Contests in Modeling

To give a clearer picture, here are some typical problem themes that students might encounter:

- **Environmental issues**: Modeling the impact of pollution on a lake’s ecosystem.
- **Epidemiology**: Predicting the spread of an infectious disease through a population.
- **Economics**: Optimizing the allocation of resources in a business scenario.
- **Transportation**: Designing efficient traffic light patterns to reduce congestion.
- **Sports analytics**: Analyzing player performance and game strategies using statistics.

These problems encourage interdisciplinary thinking and require integrating knowledge from various scientific fields.

How to Get Involved in Mathematical Modeling

Contests

Many organizations and schools host mathematical modeling competitions for high school students. Some well-known contests include:

- **HiMCM (High School Mathematical Contest in Modeling)**: An international contest organized by COMAP.
- **M3 Challenge**: Another prestigious contest focused on modeling real-world problems.
- **Local and regional contests**: Many states and school districts organize their own competitions to prepare students for national events.

Students interested in participating should talk to math teachers or school counselors who can provide information about registration and team formation.

Resources for Aspiring Contestants

To prepare and excel, consider these resources:

- **COMAP’s official website**: Offers past problems and sample solutions.
- **Mathematical modeling textbooks**: Such as “A First Course in Mathematical Modeling” by Frank R. Giordano.
- **Online courses and tutorials**: Platforms like Khan Academy, Coursera, or YouTube channels focused on applied math and programming.
- **Software tutorials**: Learning MATLAB, Python libraries like NumPy and Pandas, or Excel pivot tables.

Engaging with these materials can boost confidence and skills.

The Impact of Participating in Modeling Contests on Students’ Futures

Participation in high school mathematical contests in modeling often influences students’ academic and career paths. Many past contestants report a greater interest in STEM fields, particularly engineering, data science, and applied mathematics.

Universities recognize the value of modeling experience during admissions, as it showcases problem-solving abilities and teamwork. Moreover, the analytical and communication skills gained are assets in virtually any profession.

In the broader context, fostering an early appreciation for modeling equips students to tackle complex challenges in our increasingly data-driven world. From climate change to healthcare innovations, the ability to translate problems into mathematical models is a powerful skill.

Whether a student is a math enthusiast or someone looking to enhance critical thinking, the high school mathematical contest in modeling offers a rewarding and enriching experience that goes far beyond the competition itself.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the High School Mathematical Contest in Modeling (HiMCM)?

The High School Mathematical Contest in Modeling (HiMCM) is a team-based competition where high school students use mathematical modeling to solve real-world problems over several days, emphasizing teamwork, creativity, and communication.

How many students can participate in a team for HiMCM?

Typically, a HiMCM team consists of up to four high school students working collaboratively on the modeling problem.

What types of problems are presented in the HiMCM competition?

HiMCM problems are open-ended real-world scenarios that require students to create, analyze, and interpret mathematical models to propose solutions.

How long do teams have to complete the HiMCM competition?

Teams usually have 36 to 48 hours to work on their chosen problem and submit a comprehensive written report detailing their mathematical modeling approach and results.

What skills are important for success in HiMCM?

Key skills include mathematical modeling, problem-solving, teamwork, critical thinking, technical writing, and the ability to apply mathematics to practical situations.

Are there any resources or training programs available for HiMCM participants?

Yes, there are various online resources, workshops, and coaching programs designed to help students learn mathematical modeling techniques and improve their contest performance.

How is the HiMCM competition judged?

Submissions are evaluated by a panel of experts based on creativity, clarity, mathematical accuracy, depth of analysis, and the quality of the written report.

What awards or recognition can teams receive in HiMCM?

Teams can earn awards such as Meritorious, Honorable Mention, or Successful Participant, with top teams potentially receiving scholarships or invitations to further competitions.

How can students register for the HiMCM competition?

Students typically register through their schools or individually via the official HiMCM website during the registration period before the contest dates.

Additional Resources

High School Mathematical Contest in Modeling: An In-Depth Exploration

high school mathematical contest in modeling represents a growing trend in STEM education, combining critical thinking, applied mathematics, and collaborative problem-solving to prepare students for real-world challenges. Unlike conventional mathematics competitions that often focus on individual speed and accuracy in solving abstract problems, mathematical modeling contests emphasize teamwork, research, and the practical application of mathematical concepts to complex, open-ended scenarios. This approach not only cultivates analytical skills but also bridges the gap between theory and practice, offering high school students a unique platform to engage deeply with mathematics.

Understanding the High School Mathematical Contest in Modeling

Mathematical modeling contests at the high school level are designed to challenge students to create and analyze mathematical representations of real-world phenomena. They typically involve teams working over several days to develop models that address a specific problem, ranging from environmental issues and social sciences to engineering and economics. The format encourages creativity and interdisciplinarity, allowing students to draw from various fields and data sources.

One of the most prominent examples is the High School Mathematical Contest in

Modeling (HiMCM), inspired by the collegiate Mathematical Contest in Modeling (MCM). HiMCM tasks teams with selecting one of multiple problem statements and producing a comprehensive paper outlining their approach, assumptions, model formulation, results, and conclusions. This format tests not only mathematical ability but also writing skills, teamwork, and communication.

Key Features of High School Mathematical Modeling Competitions

- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Students typically compete in teams of three to five, promoting collaboration and division of labor based on individual strengths.
- **Extended Time Frame:** Unlike timed exams, these contests span 36 to 72 hours, allowing thorough research and model refinement.
- **Open-Ended Problems:** Problems do not have a single correct answer but require justification of assumptions and validation of results.
- **Use of Technology:** Teams are encouraged to use computational tools, software, and data analysis techniques to enhance their models.
- **Comprehensive Reporting:** Submission includes detailed reports explaining the model, methodology, and implications.

The Educational Impact of Mathematical Modeling Contests

Participating in a high school mathematical contest in modeling offers multifaceted educational benefits. It shifts the focus from rote memorization to the application of mathematical reasoning in novel contexts. This experiential learning fosters a deeper understanding of mathematical principles and their relevance.

Enhancement of Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills

Modeling contests compel students to approach problems systematically: defining variables, making assumptions, constructing equations, and interpreting results. This iterative process demands critical evaluation at each step, honing analytical and logical reasoning skills crucial for STEM

careers.

Promotion of Interdisciplinary Learning

The nature of modeling problems often requires knowledge beyond pure mathematics, incorporating physics, biology, economics, and social sciences. This interdisciplinarity broadens students' perspectives and encourages the integration of diverse ideas, preparing them for complex real-world issues.

Development of Communication and Writing Abilities

Documenting the modeling process in a clear and professional report is a significant component of these contests. Students learn to articulate complex mathematical concepts in accessible language, an essential skill for academic and professional success.

Comparative Analysis: Mathematical Modeling vs. Traditional Math Competitions

While traditional mathematics contests like AMC or Math Olympiads focus on individual performance and abstract problem-solving within strict time limits, modeling contests emphasize collaborative, applied problem-solving over extended periods. Each has distinct advantages:

- **Traditional Contests:** Encourage speed, precision, and mastery of theoretical concepts. They are well-suited for identifying quick problem solvers and analytic thinkers.
- **Modeling Contests:** Foster teamwork, research skills, and practical application. They appeal to students interested in real-world problems and interdisciplinary approaches.

For educators and students, combining participation in both types can provide a balanced mathematical education, enhancing diverse skill sets.

Challenges and Considerations in Organizing Modeling Contests

Despite their benefits, high school mathematical contests in modeling present

unique logistical and pedagogical challenges:

- **Resource Intensity:** Teams require access to computational tools, data sets, and mentorship, which may be limited in some schools.
- **Assessment Subjectivity:** Evaluating open-ended models involves subjective judgment regarding creativity, rigor, and clarity, demanding well-trained judges.
- **Team Dynamics:** Ensuring equitable participation and managing conflicts within teams can be complex.

Addressing these challenges is critical to maximizing the contests' educational value and accessibility.

Global Reach and Future Trends

The popularity of high school mathematical contests in modeling is expanding worldwide. Many countries have adopted or adapted the HiMCM format, reflecting a global recognition of the importance of applied mathematics education. Increasingly, contests integrate data science, machine learning, and computational modeling, aligning with evolving industry demands.

Moreover, virtual and hybrid contest formats have emerged, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing broader participation and collaboration across geographic boundaries. These innovations are making mathematical modeling contests more inclusive and accessible.

Encouraging Diversity and Inclusion

Efforts to broaden participation among underrepresented groups in STEM are gaining traction within the modeling contest community. Initiatives include mentorship programs, workshops, and scholarships aimed at fostering diversity. Promoting inclusivity ensures a richer pool of ideas and equitable opportunities for all students.

Conclusion: The Evolving Role of Mathematical Modeling in High School Education

A high school mathematical contest in modeling exemplifies a progressive approach to mathematics education, emphasizing real-world relevance,

collaboration, and comprehensive problem-solving. As the landscape of STEM education evolves, these contests prepare students not only to excel in mathematics but also to become innovative thinkers capable of addressing complex societal challenges. For educators and policymakers, supporting and expanding access to mathematical modeling competitions is a strategic investment in cultivating the next generation of leaders and problem solvers.

High School Mathematical Contest In Modeling

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high school mathematical contest in modeling: Mathematics in Middle and Secondary School Alexander Karp, Nicholas Wasserman, 2014-11-01 The experience and knowledge acquired in teacher education courses should build important fundamentals for the future teaching of mathematics. In particular, experience in mathematical problem solving, and in planning lessons devoted to problem solving, is an essential component of teacher preparation. This book develops a problem solving approach and is intended to be a text used in mathematics education courses (or professional development) for pre-service or in-service middle and secondary school teachers. It can be used both in graduate and undergraduate courses, in accordance with the focus of teacher preparation programs. The content of the book is suited especially for those students who are further along in their mathematics education preparation, as the text is more involved with mathematical ideas and problem solving, and discusses some of the intricate pedagogical considerations that arise in teaching. The text is written not as an introduction to mathematics education (a first course), but rather as a second, or probably, third course. The book deals both with general methodology issues in mathematics education incorporating a problem solving approach (Chapters 1-6) and with more concrete applications within the context of specific topics – algebra, geometry, and discrete mathematics (Chapters 7-13). The book provides opportunities for teachers to engage in authentic mathematical thinking. The mathematical ideas under consideration build on specific middle and secondary school content while simultaneously pushing the teacher to consider more advanced topics, as well as various connections across mathematical domains. The book strives to preserve the spirit of discussion, and at times even argument, typical of collaborative work on a lesson plan. Based on the accumulated experience of work with future and current teachers, the book assumes that students have some background in lesson planning, and extends their thinking further. Specifically, this book aims to provide a discussion of how a lesson plan is constructed, including the ways in which problems are selected or invented, rather than the compilation of prepared lesson plans. This approach reflects the authors' view that the process of

searching for an answer is often more important than the formal result.

high school mathematical contest in modeling: Handbook for Achieving Gender Equity Through Education Susan S. Klein, Barbara Richardson, Dolores A. Grayson, Lynn H. Fox, Cheris Kramarae, Diane S. Pollard, Carol Anne Dwyer, 2014-05-22 First published in 1985, the Handbook for Achieving Gender Equity Through Education quickly established itself as the essential reference work concerning gender equity in education. This new, expanded edition provides a 20-year retrospective of the field, one that has the great advantage of documenting U.S. national data on the gains and losses in the efforts to advance gender equality through policies such as Title IX, the landmark federal law prohibiting sex discrimination in education, equity programs and research. Key features include: Expertise – Like its predecessor, over 200 expert authors and reviewers provide accurate, consensus, research-based information on the nature of gender equity challenges and what is needed to meet them at all levels of education. Content Area Focus – The analysis of gender equity within specific curriculum areas has been expanded from 6 to 10 chapters including mathematics, science, and engineering. Global/Diversity Focus – Global gender equity is addressed in a separate chapter as well as in numerous other chapters. The expanded section on gender equity strategies for diverse populations contains seven chapters on African Americans, Latina/os, Asian and Pacific Island Americans, American Indians, gifted students, students with disabilities, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students. Action Oriented – All chapters contain practical recommendations for making education activities and outcomes more gender equitable. A final chapter consolidates individual chapter recommendations for educators, policymakers, and researchers to achieve gender equity in and through education. New Material – Expanded from 25 to 31 chapters, this new edition includes: *more emphasis on male gender equity and on sexuality issues; *special within population gender equity challenges (race, ability and disability, etc); *coeducation and single sex education; *increased use of rigorous research strategies such as meta-analysis showing more sex similarities and fewer sex differences and of evaluations of implementation programs; *technology and gender equity is now treated in three chapters; *women’s and gender studies; *communication skills relating to English, bilingual, and foreign language learning; and *history and implementation of Title IX and other federal and state policies. Since there is so much misleading information about gender equity and education, this Handbook will be essential for anyone who wants accurate, research-based information on controversial gender equity issues—journalists, policy makers, teachers, Title IX coordinators, equity trainers, women’s and gender study faculty, students, and parents.

high school mathematical contest in modeling: *High School Mathematics at Work* National Research Council, Mathematical Sciences Education Board, 1998-05-27 Traditionally, vocational mathematics and precollege mathematics have been separate in schools. But the technological world in which today's students will work and live calls for increasing connection between mathematics and its applications. Workplace-based mathematics may be good mathematics for everyone. High School Mathematics at Work illuminates the interplay between technical and academic mathematics. This collection of thought-provoking essaysâ€by mathematicians, educators, and other expertsâ€is enhanced with illustrative tasks from workplace and everyday contexts that suggest ways to strengthen high school mathematical education. This important book addresses how to make mathematical education of all students meaningfulâ€how to meet the practical needs of students entering the work force after high school as well as the needs of students going on to postsecondary education. The short readable essays frame basic issues, provide background, and suggest alternatives to the traditional separation between technical and academic mathematics. They are accompanied by intriguing multipart problems that illustrate how deep mathematics functions in everyday settingsâ€from analysis of ambulance response times to energy utilization, from buying a used car to rounding off to simplify problems. The book addresses the role of standards in mathematics education, discussing issues such as finding common ground between science and mathematics education standards, improving the articulation from school to work, and comparing SAT results across settings. Experts discuss how to develop curricula so that students learn to solve

problems they are likely to encounter in lifeâ€while also providing them with approaches to unfamiliar problems. The book also addresses how teachers can help prepare students for postsecondary education. For teacher education the book explores the changing nature of pedagogy and new approaches to teacher development. What kind of teaching will allow mathematics to be a guide rather than a gatekeeper to many career paths? Essays discuss pedagogical implication in problem-centered teaching, the role of complex mathematical tasks in teacher education, and the idea of making open-ended tasksâ€and the student work they elicitâ€central to professional discourse. High School Mathematics at Work presents thoughtful views from experts. It identifies rich possibilities for teaching mathematics and preparing students for the technological challenges of the future. This book will inform and inspire teachers, teacher educators, curriculum developers, and others involved in improving mathematics education and the capabilities of tomorrow's work force.

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high school mathematical contest in modeling: Awesome Math Titu Andreescu, Kathy Cordeiro, Alina Andreescu, 2019-12-17 Help your students to think critically and creatively through team-based problem solving instead of focusing on testing and outcomes. Professionals throughout the education system are recognizing that standardized testing is holding students back. Schools tend to view children as outcomes rather than as individuals who require guidance on thinking critically and creatively. Awesome Math focuses on team-based problem solving to teach discrete mathematics, a subject essential for success in the STEM careers of the future. Built on the increasingly popular growth mindset, this timely book emphasizes a problem-solving approach for developing the skills necessary to think critically, creatively, and collaboratively. In its current form, math education is a series of exercises: straightforward problems with easily-obtained answers. Problem solving, however, involves multiple creative approaches to solving meaningful and interesting problems. The authors, co-founders of the multi-layered educational organization AwesomeMath, have developed an innovative approach to teaching mathematics that will enable educators to: Move their students beyond the calculus trap to study the areas of mathematics most of them will need in the modern world Show students how problem solving will help them achieve their educational and career goals and form lifelong communities of support and collaboration Encourage and reinforce curiosity, critical thinking, and creativity in their students Get students into the growth mindset, coach math teams, and make math fun again Create lesson plans built on problem based learning and identify and develop educational resources in their schools Awesome

Math: Teaching Mathematics with Problem Based Learning is a must-have resource for general education teachers and math specialists in grades 6 to 12, and resource specialists, special education teachers, elementary educators, and other primary education professionals.

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high school mathematical contest in modeling: Proceedings of the 2024 7th International Conference on Humanities Education and Social Sciences (ICHESS 2024) Feiru Zeng, Asad Khalil, Feng Wu, Jianfei Luo, 2024-12-20 This is an open access book. ICHESS started in 2018, the last five sessions of ICHESS have all been successfully published. ICHESS is to

bring together innovative academics and industrial experts in the field of Humanities Education and Social Sciences to a common forum. The 7th International Conference on Humanities Education and Social Sciences(ICHESS2024) will be held on October 11-13, 2024 in Ningbo, China. This conference serves as a platform for the exchange of innovative ideas, cutting-edge research, and collaborative initiatives that address the pressing issues faced by our communities today. The overarching theme of this year's conference is Bridging Traditions and Innovations, which underscores the importance of harmonizing classical perspectives with modern advancements to foster a holistic understanding of human behaviour, culture, and societal development. By facilitating dialogue and connections among diverse fields such as history, philosophy, sociology, education, and psychology, the conference aims to promote interdisciplinary research and enhance educational practices. Ultimately, the goal is to inspire actionable insights and foster sustainable solutions that contribute to societal well-being and global progress. This year's conference distinguishes itself from previous editions by emphasizing a set of unique and timely research themes designed to address the evolving landscapes of humanities and social sciences. One of the primary themes is Digital Humanities and Society, which explores how digital technologies are transforming historical research, cultural preservation, and educational methodologies. Another significant theme is Social Justice and Equity, focusing on contemporary challenges related to race, gender, class, and access to education, and fostering discussions on policies and practices that aim to create a more just society. Globalization and Cultural Identity is another key theme, examining the effects of global interconnectedness on local cultures and identities, and how these dynamics shape both individual and collective experiences in diverse societies. Additionally, Sustainability and Ethics invites scholars to delve into the ethical dimensions of environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and the role of humanities and social sciences in promoting sustainable development. Furthermore, this year's conference introduces a theme on Interdisciplinary Approaches to Crisis Management, addressing the critical need for humanities and social sciences perspectives in understanding and managing global crises such as pandemics, economic instability, and political upheavals. By focusing on these distinct research themes, the conference aims to not only advance academic discourse but also inspire concrete actions that address the multifaceted challenges of our time.

high school mathematical contest in modeling: *Nonlinear Optimization* William P. Fox, 2020-12-08 Optimization is the act of obtaining the best result under given circumstances. In design, construction, and maintenance of any engineering system, engineers must make technological and managerial decisions to minimize either the effort or cost required or to maximize benefits. There is no single method available for solving all optimization problems efficiently. Several optimization methods have been developed for different types of problems. The optimum-seeking methods are mathematical programming techniques (specifically, nonlinear programming techniques). Nonlinear Optimization: Models and Applications presents the concepts in several ways to foster understanding. Geometric interpretation: is used to re-enforce the concepts and to foster understanding of the mathematical procedures. The student sees that many problems can be analyzed, and approximate solutions found before analytical solutions techniques are applied. Numerical approximations: early on, the student is exposed to numerical techniques. These numerical procedures are algorithmic and iterative. Worksheets are provided in Excel, MATLAB®, and MapleTM to facilitate the procedure. Algorithms: all algorithms are provided with a step-by-step format. Examples follow the summary to illustrate its use and application. Nonlinear Optimization: Models and Applications: Emphasizes process and interpretation throughout Presents a general classification of optimization problems Addresses situations that lead to models illustrating many types of optimization problems Emphasizes model formulations Addresses a special class of problems that can be solved using only elementary calculus Emphasizes model solution and model sensitivity analysis About the author: William P. Fox is an emeritus professor in the Department of Defense Analysis at the Naval Postgraduate School. He received his Ph.D. at Clemson University and has taught at the United States Military Academy and at Francis Marion University where he was the chair of mathematics. He has written many publications, including over 20 books and over 150

journal articles. Currently, he is an adjunct professor in the Department of Mathematics at the College of William and Mary. He is the emeritus director of both the High School Mathematical Contest in Modeling and the Mathematical Contest in Modeling.

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